

D-8120

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

SECRET

File No.

REPORT

Special Branch - SI Station,

Date. October 7, 1937.

Subject. Communication dated October 4, 1937 from H.B. Consulate
General regarding one Darell DRAKE, British.

Made by. D.H. Fitts. Forwarded by. *D.H. Fitts*

With reference to the contents of the attached communication dated October 4, 1937 from the British Consulate General, I have to state the following:-

Darell DRAKE, British, born in England on May 10, 1891, is a man of good family, of excellent education and address, who in his younger days, was intended for the Church. He studied theology for four years at Kelham College (Anglican Church Training Educational Centre) in England with the object of taking Holy Orders, but shortly before he was due to take his examinations, he came to the conclusion that he was not fitted for the life of a cleric, left the college and subsequently took up a scholastic career, having had a thorough grounding in the Classics, English, Greek, Latin and like subjects.

In 1913 Drake left England for Japan via Sioeria and was engaged as a teacher of English and the Classics at Keio University and at the Nautical Government College.

During his stay in Japan he took advantage of the occasion to make friends in well-to-do Japanese circles, and more important, to learn to read, write and speak the Japanese language, which knowledge he has retained until this day.

Upon arrival in Japan in 1913, he was a young man of 22 years, but inspite of his youth, he availed himself of the then extremely cheap values of properties to purchase a small parcel of land and thereon to build a house. During his sojourn in Japan he met and married (on April 6, 1915), a lady who by birth was either German or Norwegian, but who, during the Great War of 1914-1918, certainly showed very definite pro-German and anti-British sympathies, despite the

*Copy to
H. B. Fitts -
submitted.*

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*copy sent
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SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

File No.....

REPORT

..... Station,

Date..... 19

2

Subject.....

Made by.....

Forwarded by.....

fact that her husband was a British subject.

In the autumn of 1915 Drake was offered a post with the Education Department of the Municipal Council in Shanghai; he accepted and commenced his duties in this city as Assistant Master at the Public School for boys on January 3, 1916. He carried out his work in a satisfactory manner, although enquiries have quite definitely shown that his marriage was far from being a happy one - a point that had considerable bearing on his conduct from about 1927 onwards. Drake, it should be mentioned, has two sons, one about 19, the other 15 years.

From 1927 onwards Drake seems to have developed a "Jekyll and Hyde" complex; on the one hand his duties of imparting scholastic knowledge to middle-form students being carried out in an excellent manner, whilst his conduct during school hours was almost exemplary; on the other, according to independent investigation coupled with information secured from non-Shanghai Municipal Council sources, his conduct in out-of-office hours was as different from that displayed during his teaching hours, as chalk is from cheese. Heavy gambling, fornicating, drunken bouts of whisky drinking (many of his associates in the teaching profession were under the impression that he was a non-smoker and non-drinker, so plausible and suave was he), and associating with many local shady characters, all contributed to making him apparently devoid of any proper sense of responsibility in handling his personal finances, resulting in his running into debt to the extent of several thousands of dollars.

Mention has already been made of his unhappy married

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

File No.....

REPORT

Station,

Date.....19

Subject.....

Made by.....Forwarded by.....

Life and the impression is gained that he was assisted in his downfall, if downfall it can be termed, by the fact that in 1927 Mrs. Drake fell in love with a soldier - a member of a British regiment stationed in Shanghai at the time. Mrs. Drake, with her husband's knowledge, followed this military gentleman to England after his transfer from Shanghai in the latter part of 1927; she returned here in the following year. In 1929 she again proceeded to England returning here in 1930, whilst in 1931 she made a third trip to the United Kingdom within a period of four years.

The excuse given by Drake for the frequency of these frequent sailings was that from 1927 onwards Mrs. Drake was suffering from a severe mental breakdown and that they were made on medical advice; nevertheless, in the light of information that the present investigation has unearthed, it is believed that the correct reason for her numerous trips to England was her infatuation for the British soldier. In spite of this, however, Drake successfully employed the above mentioned excuse to apply almost annually from 1928 until 1936 to the Shanghai Municipal Council for loans of amounts from £1,000 to £5,600, to be deducted from the Superannuation Fund standing to his credit. During the same period, he borrowed money right and left in Shanghai, failed to pay his many creditors and spent the greater part of the money he had and that which constituted his monthly salary, on gambling (Hai-Alai, dog and pony racing), women and drink.

In July 1931 he divorced Mrs. Drake "on technical grounds as a necessary legal safeguard for his sons" but

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

File No.

REPORT

Station,

Date.....19

4

Subject.....

Made by.....Forwarded by.....

continued to maintain her.

In January 1936, Drake was promoted Junior Assistant Master of the Public School for Boys at a salary of \$844 per month.

In April 1934 Drake and his divorced wife were quietly married at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Shanghai.

During May 1936, it was discovered that Drake in his capacity of Junior Assistant Master of the Public School for Boys, had systematically had certain amounts of coal, totalling six tons, ordered for the school, delivered to his own residence during the previous winter. Following disciplinary action taken by the Education Department of the Shanghai Municipal Council, Drake was reverted to the position of Assistant Master, which brought with it a decrease in salary of ~~xxx~~ \$70 per month.

On January 6, 1937 Drake's salary was increased, according to the Council's grading scale, to \$979 per month.

On July 7, 1937 he sailed for Hongkong on the s.s. "Saviken" having been granted seven months' Long Leave as from July 1 to be followed by retirement on pension. In addition he was granted Full Superannuation - some \$30,000 - out prior to it being handed him, nearly \$24,000 was utilised to settle his outstanding debts in Shanghai.

During his long career in Shanghai, he remained on very friendly terms with many well-to-do local Japanese and also made almost yearly trips to Japan during the summer vacation periods.

During the course of investigation numerous persons have been heard to express their amazement that a man such

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SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

File No.....

REPORT

.....Station,

5

Date.....19

Subject.....

Made by.....Forwarded by.....

as Drake should have been allowed to remain in the employ
of the Council for so many years, since it was by no
means a secret that he owed money to many persons and
concerns, and that he had expressed the intention of never
repaying anything if "he could get away with it."

He has never come to the official notice of the
Police prior to this enquiry, but a suave, plausible,
individual, he can be summed up as being a man with
no moral scruples, a man who would do anything for money
and a man in whom no reliance can be placed.

J. A. Pitts

D. S.

D.C. (Crime & Special Branches).

BRITISH CONSULATE-GENERAL,
P.O. BOX 259. SHANGHAI.

4th October, 1937.

PERSONAL.

Dear Bourne,

A British Subject named DARELL DRAKE, who apparently was for some time employed by the Shanghai Municipal Council as a schoolmaster, arrived in Hong Kong from Shanghai on 11th July.

Although he has given a plausible explanation of his visit to Hong Kong (he states that he is interested in an ore proposition), he is being regarded with suspicion on account of his close association with Japanese and certain undesirable foreigners. He reads and writes Japanese and was a professor in Tokyo University for 14 years before he joined the Shanghai Municipal Council.

I should be very grateful for anything you may be able to tell me about this man if he came to your notice in any way.

Yours sincerely,

Major K. M. Bourne, M.C.,
Shanghai.

Amesbury

DC (C-5B)

Early plan

MB
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SECRET

October 8

37.

Dear Barton,

With reference to your letter dated
4th October, 1937, I forward herewith for your
information a copy of a report regarding
Darell Drake.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosed
10.3.37

(Sd) R. M. BOWLING

James Barton, Esq.,

H.B.M. Consulate-General,

Shanghai.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL
BRITISH CONSULATE-GENERAL

P.O. BOX 259.

8720
SHANGHAI

Date 13 10 37

9th October, 1937.

Dear Bourne,

Many thanks for the interesting
report sent under cover of your letter No.D. 8120
of 8th October. The Hong Kong authorities are
being informed.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Hartman

Major K. M. Bourne, M.C.,
Shanghai.

